

LTF-129 ensures Bagram runs smoothly

Story by Spc. Kelly Hunt
4th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – Most troops don't think about the work that goes into bringing water to base before taking a shower, or the danger that drivers may encounter making sure fuel supplies stay constant.

But thanks to troops and civilians from the Logistics Task Force-129 working together to ensure things run smoothly troops stationed here will never have to.

"It's hard to say what's most important about our job because if we run out of fuel, all the flying would stop; if we run out of bullets, all the shooting stops (and) if we run out of food and water, all the soldiering stops," said Maj. Randy Nelson, LTF-129, Support Operations Officer. "If you don't notice anything and things are



Photo by Command Sgt. Major Bill Thompson

Master Sgt. Michael Mosier and Maj. Doyle Lassitter, both of Logistics Task Force-129, perform a sling load operation Thursday. This mission is just one aspect of operations that personnel are responsible for within the Bagram area.

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Logistics Task Force-129 keeps Bagram bottled up

Story by Sgt. Johnny A. Thompson
4th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – With personnel from more than six different nations stationed at Bagram Air Base the likelihood of running out of something is inevitable; however, thanks to the efforts of Logistics Task Force-129 that something will never be bottled water.

In charge of quenching the thirsty of the more than 11,000 coalition troops here, LTF-129's mission is to keep the bottled water supply on Bagram plentiful.

"[Our] mission is important to [Bagram] because (people) need water to survive," said Capt. Dennis Utt, Logistics Task Force 129 Class I Accountable Officer. "The body needs water to function, without it soldiers

can't perform their mission and that puts the entire mission (Operation Enduring Freedom) in jeopardy, so it's important to have it readily available for soldiers."

Keeping H2O available for Bagram isn't an arduous task, but when it consumed at the rate of 21,000 liters a day making sure the supply stays plentiful is a priority and an expensive task.

"We order bottled water on a weekly basis," said Utt. "We examine what has been used for the week then we put in a [request] order that goes to the joint logistics center and they submit the order to the primary vender. Per day more than \$16,800 of worth of (bottled) water is consumed and that's not including shipping, and transporting the water."

Utt noted that the bottled water supply doesn't only support Bagram but also the forward operating bases and military facility in Kabul.

Once Bagram's primary water vender, Seven Seas, receives the order

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World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



Iraqis display pictures of their relatives killed in recent suicide attacks as they demonstrate against the former Saddam Hussein regime Friday in downtown Baghdad.

Pres. Bush back from Iraq; another attack on troops

BAGHDAD, Iraq — President Bush's surprise Thanksgiving visit to Baghdad didn't deter the fighting in Iraq, as guerrillas launched a mortar attack on Friday that killed a U.S. soldier and U.S. troops seized weapons and arrested anti-coalition suspects, including a cleric.

The soldier from the 101st Airborne Division was killed Friday in a mortar attack on the division's main compound in the northern Iraqi town of Mosul, according to Master Sgt. Kelly Tyler of the 101st.

Tyler said one Iraqi worker suffered minor injuries in the attack.

Soldiers found the location where the four mortar rounds were launched and were searching for the attackers, Tyler said.

In the Ramadi area, soldiers with the 82nd Airborne Division launched a raid in Haswah to capture Sheikh Taha Kitar, who is suspected of inciting anti-coalition activities among students near Haswah and Iskandariyah and financing insurgent cells. Three other people were captured during the operation.

U.S. Central Command also announced the death early Thursday of a soldier from the 82nd Airborne's Task Force All American — operating west of Baghdad — from a non-hostile gunshot wound.

Central Command said the soldier was in his barracks near Ramadi at the time of the incident,

which is under investigation. An Army medic who heard the shot found the soldier without a pulse but was able to revive him.

The soldier died from the wounds, however, at a medical center.

The latest deaths bring the number of U.S. troops killed in the war to 437 — 299 hostile, 138 non-hostile. Since Bush declared an end to major combat operations on May 1st, 298 have died — 185 from hostile fire.



Beijing insists self-ruled, democratic Taiwan is a renegade province that must eventually return to China.

China 'concerned' at Taiwan bill

BEIJING — China says it is "gravely concerned" over Taiwan's passing of a controversial referendum bill and repeated a warning it would never tolerate independence for the island.

Taiwan's parliament approved a bill Thursday that could allow the island to vote on sovereignty issues — but the opposition managed to water down most of the provisions that would most likely anger Beijing.

"We are gravely concerned about the situation surrounding Taiwan's referendum law," said an unnamed spokesman for the Cabinet's Taiwan Affairs Office, according to the state-run *Xinhua* news agency.

"We are paying close attention to the development of the situation."

Though the statement did not amount to the "strong response" promised earlier this week, and failed to repeat threats of military action, it was a clear warning that Taiwan's independence could never happen.

"We are firmly opposed to anyone using the referendum law to push independence for Taiwan. Our position on the Taiwan question is very clear. There is only one China in the world, and Taiwan is an inseparable part of China's sacred territory," the spokesman added.

"China's sovereignty and territorial integrity

cannot be divided."

The official added that China remains "resolutely opposed" to anyone using a referendum to promote Taiwanese independence.

On Thursday, Taiwan's parliament threw out most of a radical version of the referendum bill proposed by President Chen Shui-bian's pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), ultimately passing a much watered-down law that makes it difficult to call a referendum on independence under the current legislature.

However, lawmakers passed the so-called "defensive referendum" allowing the president to call a plebiscite on independence if China attacked the island.

In a blow to Chen, Taiwan's two main opposition parties — which control the majority of parliament — were able to defeat most of the major provisions in the bill.

U.S.: Afghan poppy production doubles between 2002, 2003

WASHINGTON — Poppy cultivation in Afghanistan doubled between 2002 and 2003 to a level 36 times higher than in the last year of rule by the Taliban, according to White House figures released Friday.

The area planted with poppies, used to make heroin and morphine, was 152,000 acres in 2003, compared with 76,900 acres in 2002 and 4,210 acres in 2001, the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy said in a statement.

The Taliban was cracking down on poppy production in the year before the U.S. military drove the movement out of office in late 2001 in response to its friendship and cooperation with the al Qaeda organization of Osama bin Laden.

The new Afghan government, led by President Hamid Karzai, has not been able to impose its will in many areas of the country, which remain under the control of warlords.

The White House statement said, "A challenging security situation ... has complicated significantly the task of implementing counternarcotics assistance programs and will continue to do so for the immediate future."

"Poppy cultivation in Afghanistan is a major and growing problem. Drug cultivation and trafficking are undermining the rule of law and putting money in the pocket of terrorists," it added, quoting office director John Walters.

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running smoothly, that means the LTF is doing their job and doing it professionally.”

Water, food and fuel are just a few of the basics that LTF personnel are responsible to provide, keep stocked and ready for troops in Bagram and the surrounding areas.

Personnel feed nearly 8,400 soldiers and civilians in five dining facilities, the largest headcount in Afghanistan. Nearly 36,000 steaks and 31,239 pounds of seafood are served monthly at these locations, facilitating 227,796 meals a month, according to LTF-129 personnel who are responsible for making sure daily operations run smoothly.

“I have over a million gallons of fuel on the ground at any given time,” he said about his fuel supply. “We go through about three million gallons a month.”

Food and fuel is accompanied by approximately 10 to 15 pallets flown into Bagram daily stocked with supplies ranging from office paper to tires to vehicle parts.

In addition to supplying the basic necessities of survival to troops here, LTF personnel fix everything on base including automobiles, weapons, forklifts and various military equipment to facilitate the basic war needs of troops.

“We have ammunition supply points which provide all the ammunition and explosives for

the forces.”

Another, less glorious, part of LTF personnel’s mission is operating the mortuary affairs section.

“For U.S. remains, we process them with the utmost dignity and respect,” said Nelson. “That’s a very emotionally charged event.”

“We’re the backbone of Bagram because without our actions, a lot of things would come to a stretching halt,” he said. “There’s a lot of moving parts that happen everyday; that’s how logistics is.”

Running Bagram alone would be an unbelievable task, but LTF-129 personnel are responsible for much more than that.

“We do tactical operations for Bagram and eleven forward operating bases,” he said. “It’s a delicate balance between base support for Bagram Air Field, tactical support for the forward operating bases and operations like Mountain Resolve and Operation Warrior Sweep that happened earlier this summer.”

They don’t have to manage all of this alone though; they do have reinforcements.

“We have KBR (Kellogg Brown and Root) services that integrate into almost all of our operations,” said Nelson. “If you come down to the LTF (personnel locations), you’re going to see a KBR service employee standing right next to a soldier accomplishing the same task.”

“We work very closely with KBR services,”

he said. “They are a very professional organization and they really enhance the effectiveness of our ability to support Bagram (which) gives us the chance to focus more on outside of Bagram. KBR services is here to back us up.”

Without help such as KBR services, LTF-129 personnel would have a much harder job. But the help doesn’t stop at KBR. Companies such as DHL and individuals aid the mission as well.

“We’re in a unique situation in Afghanistan,” said Nelson. “The supply lines are complex.”

DHL personnel supplement the food supply by flying in fresh fruit and vegetables from Germany twice a week, according to Nelson. Important parts and packages are also flown into base through DHL flights. And what can’t be flown in is driven in.

It is seven to nine day trip to bring water into the country and a ten-day trip for fuel to arrive. Both are brought in by local nations hired to make the journey due to their expertise of the area and routes.

Personnel from LTF-129 control everything from water to supplying forward operating bases with vehicles and ammunition. When everything’s going smoothly and as planned, troops here on Bagram and in the surrounding areas, will never notice these personnel. In this case, no news is good news.

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and it has water shipped from various places in (Southwest Asia) to the port of Karachi where it is trucked to Bagram.

When the water is delivered to Bagram and is taken to the class one yard (Bagram’s central storage yard) where it is stored and distributed by Kellogg Brown and Root personnel.

“It normally takes over 100 storage units to hold Bagram’s water supply,” said Leroy Young, Kellogg Brown and Root worker and Bagram warehouse foreman.

Relating the size of space needed to hold the bottled water, Young said the space has to be big enough to hold the “1.7 million to 2.5 million bottled water (that) are stored in the Class I yard (on an average week).”

Utt noted that it takes a staff of 63 personnel (Army Soldiers, Kellogg Brown and Root, and host nation workers) to manage and maintain the water supply.

Though the volume of bottled water in the class one yard may vary depending on the season the minimum amount, a 14 days supply (394,000 liters), is always on hand.

“In the summer months we have to keep more water available because people consume more to stay hydrated, but in the colder months we usually don’t have to worry about the supply getting [depleted],”

said Young.

However, if the bottled water supply were to be completely depleted and re-supply not available LTF-129 has set up a plan at Bagram and its supporting elements obeying its thirst.

“We’ve prepared for the possibility that if our (bottled) water supply were to dry up and we couldn’t get more what actions we’d take,” said Utt.

“We’d use potable water. We have a contingency plan that places water Buffalos throughout the base and personnel would get water through that process,” he said.

Utt noted that Bagram personnel could consume portable water because Kellogg Brown and Root vigorously test the water daily ensuring that the proper levels of the water are balanced and safe.

While the bottled water supply doesn’t seem to be a scarce commodity, Utt noted that it shouldn’t be used frivolously.

“Be conservative with water and use it as needed,” said Utt. “While it isn’t in threat of not being available wasting it is (simply) wasting money.”

While not promoting waste, conversely Young said, “[Bagram can drink all the water it wants, we are not likely to run out of water anytime soon. (Bottled) water is the probably the last thing that Bagram will be out of.”

On the Prowl...

2-87 Infantry Catamounts make their presence known during Operation Mountain Resolve

*Photopage by Sgt. Greg Heath
4th Public Affairs Detachment*

More than three weeks ago, elements of 2nd Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment of the 10th Mountain Division dropped into Nuristan Province and set up Firebase Catamount in support of Operation Mountain Resolve. Their mission was to secure the area for maneuvering units but

in the recent weeks the mission has evolved. From the firebase the Soldiers conduct various missions, including cordon and searches, cache recoveries, vehicle checkpoints and mounted and dismounted patrols, along with offering some humanitarian assistance to the surrounding villages according to 2-87 Inf. Commander Lt. Col. David Paschal.



(Left) Soldiers have recovered hundreds of explosive items used to create improvised explosive devices, including mortar rounds, rockets, grenades, anti-personnel mines and dynamite.



Soldiers take to the streets during a cordon and search mission.



Infantry Soldiers perform security as the rest of the company moves into the village to begin their search of suspected compounds.



A soldier in a Humvee pulls security overwatch during a mission



Catamount soldiers stack up near the door of a compound being searched for illegal weapons.

FREEDOM'S VOICES

A lot more people have reason to be thankful this year...

By Staff Sgt. Scott T. Sturkol

When I was in Iraq in late October, out on a Basra street patrol with the British Army, we had an Iraqi interpreter with us named Ahmed.

Ahmed was a man in his late 30s who was partially bald and spoke broken English, but whenever he spoke it was easy enough to understand what he meant. During the patrol we had discussed many things, but one thing he said sticks with me today and will for a long time. He said, "Say thank you to Mr. Bush! We are free from Saddam Hussein and we thank him for it."

Ahmed's praise for the president was also meant for all the American people. Even though the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday is not celebrated in Iraq as it is in America, what he and the majority of Iraqis I visited with expressed to me during my trip was that they were thankful for freedom. It is obviously something they weren't used to, but they know that at this time last year they weren't free so their expression of thankfulness is evident everywhere you go in Iraq.

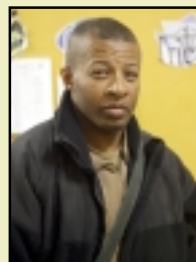
Ahmed's words can also give us all reason to be thankful at home. On the frontlines of the global war on terrorism, the lives of American soldiers, Marines, airmen, and sailors are on the line to protect the freedom we enjoy at home. The U.S. military is an all-volunteer force and like me, they want to protect that precious right of freedom we as Americans have enjoyed for more than 225 years.

For the first time in my military career, and in my life for that matter, I will be deployed away from family and friends this Thanksgiving holiday. I am thankful to have wonderful people to come home to when I am done, but I am also thankful that I have had a chance to directly support an effort that brings freedom to people not just in Iraq and Afghanistan, but in other parts of the world as well.

We will be thinking of family and friends back home and also of where else we could be for the holiday. We will be giving thanks to our heroes on the homefront, and to the heroes on the battlefield. But most of all, we will probably be like Ahmed. We will give thanks for our freedom and we will be thankful we were a part of something that helped bring it to a whole lot more people this year.

STREET TALK

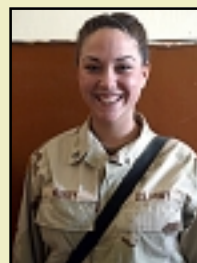
What did you most enjoy about thanksgiving here at Bagram?



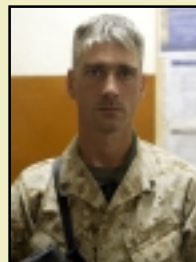
We had a football game and my team won.

Sgt. Ronnie Veal, Sr.
205th Eng. Bn.

Since I couldn't be with my daughter, then I was really thankful to be with the soldiers from my battalion.



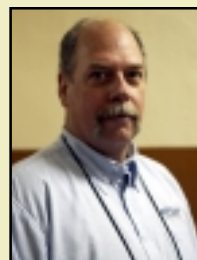
Pfc. Kristene Murry,
HHC, 1st Bn., 130 Av.



The roast beef and pumpkin pie were good. The pie was almost as good as my mother-in-laws.

Cpl. Christopher McCain,
2nd Bn., 8th Marines

The food was great. They did a fine job.



Glenn Allison,
Air Traffic Control tower

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Afghanistan Hot Topics

(Compiled by CJTF-180 Public Affairs)



Helicopter crash reminds America of its Afghan conflict

By Rupert Cornwell

(*Common Dreams News Center*) – The death of five U.S. Soldiers in a helicopter crash just north of Kabul gave Americans an unpleasant reminder of the unresolved campaign in Afghanistan, the second and often forgotten front in President Bush's war against terrorism.

The cause of the incident – in which eight soldiers were also wounded – was still not clear, 24 hours after the MH-53 helicopter went down after it left coalition headquarters at Bagram Air Base.

Anti-U.S. militants claimed that sustained machine-gun fire from the ground was responsible, but the Pentagon said mechanical failure was a more likely explanation. Eight soldiers were also wounded in the crash. What is clear is that, two years after the overthrow of the former Taliban regime which sheltered Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda organization, the war continues and that, in some areas, that former malign alliance is regrouping.

The attacks, some from bases in the tribal areas just inside Pakistan, now constitute an increasing threat, not only for the 8,500 U.S. troops in the field against them but also to international efforts to rebuild the country. Indeed, according to Gen. John Abizaid, head of U.S. Central Command which ran both the 2001 Afghan campaign and the 2003 Iraq war, "daily combat operations in Afghanistan are every bit as much and every bit as difficult as those in Iraq". In the past six months, 13 aid workers have been killed, most recently a French employee of the United Nations who was shot dead in the southern town of Ghanzi. Shortly before the MH-53 came down, two US soldiers were wounded when the jeep in which they were traveling was struck by a remote controlled bomb.

That ambush came near the flashpoint town of Shkin, close to the Pakistan border and not far from where two CIA agents were killed in an ambush last month. In all, some 35 Americans have died from hostile fire since the start of the war; nine in the Shkin region since January, according to the Pentagon.

Afghanistan moves to close local warlords' 'private jails'

(AP) – Afghan officials want to close the country's private jails, which are often used by local warlords to imprison their personal enemies or to extort money.

Afghanistan's Independent Human Rights Commission says it has documented the existence of at least 12 private jails around the country.

Ahmad Nader Nadery, who chairs the commission, says warlords and corrupt local officials use private prisons to intimidate political rivals and other people they dislike.

"They are not only political enemies, but they are, as well, some personal enemies that they had some family problems with or some financial problems with," he explained.

Mr. Nadery says many of the private jails are in fact registered as government prisons but are used for the arbitrary incarceration of anyone who displeases a local military commander or other local official.

He cites one case in which a heroin-dealing police chief used a prison under his authority to intimidate business partners.

"You can find that the head of police tried to detain somebody because they were not agreed on a deal for drugs. So he just put him in detention to get the money," he said.

After the overthrow of Afghanistan's hard-line Taliban leaders in 2001, the transitional government placed most of the country's administrative districts under the authority of anti-Taliban commanders.

Economic reconstruction key to Afghan success

WASHINGTON (*The Daily Star-Lebanon*) – Economic success is crucial to the stability and political development of Afghanistan, senior Afghan officials said at a summit here aimed at shoring up further support for reconstruction. They called on international donors to speed their contributions and fulfill their pledges of reconstruction aid.

U.S. officials also urged the international community to accelerate its economic support

in light of a \$1.2 billion aid package passed by Congress last week. Although most Afghan officials expressed gratitude for the American aid package, they stressed the need for more and sustained economic aid.

"Now is not the time to walk away from the reconstruction effort," Foreign Affairs Minister Abdullah Abdullah said. "We need your help as the lead coalition partner to accelerate the successes we have achieved and build on them."

The aid Afghanistan received in the bill that President George W. Bush signed into law last week is slight compared to the \$18.6 billion allocated for Iraq's reconstruction. Land-locked Afghanistan has more people and fewer resources than oil-rich Iraq. Yet Abdullah expressed gratitude for the accelerated commitment but cautioned the US that it was just a start. John Taylor, undersecretary for international affairs in the US Treasury Department, urged other donors to give more to Afghanistan's reconstruction and to set new and measurable goals.

"Economic reconstruction can help increase economic gains and lock in politically important gains that have been achieved thus far," he said. Trade, commerce and finance have once again started to flow through Afghanistan, after decades wreaked by wars, oppression and drought. Most of the speakers at the summit pointed to an economic growth rate of 30 percent last year, continuing strong this year at 28 percent. This growth started from a very low base, but indicates success on a variety of fronts including legal, economic and development.

Some 400,000 jobs have been created, although unemployment is still high, with a quarter of the estimated 8 million-strong labor force unemployed, said Women's Affairs Minister Habiba Sarabi. Afghanistan now has a central bank, a stable currency (the afghani), and a nascent banking system that will facilitate reconstruction and private sector development. In September, President Hamid Karzai approved a law that opened the way for Standard Chartered of Britain, the National Bank of Pakistan and a microcredit bank supported by the Aga Khan Foundation to operate in the country.

Entertainment

November 29, 2003

Published in the interest of those serving in Operation Enduring Freedom

Bagram, Afghanistan

Bringing Thanksgiving to troops at Bagram

Story by Sgt. Johnny A. Thompson
4th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – When coalition troops here sat down for Thanksgiving dinner they paid no regard to the numerous hours that it took to prepare the more than 60,000 pounds of food they consumed, they simply enjoyed the meal. For the men of Kellogg Brown and Root, who prepared the feast, it wasn't an insult – conversely, it was a compliment.

With their mission to bring a traditional American Thanksgiving dinner to service members at Bagram Air Base, Kellogg Brown and Root strategized plans for the meal as if they were commanders going into combat.

"We initially started planning the [Thanksgiving] dinner three month ago," said Willie Mickens, Kellogg Brown and Root food service manager. "Then two weeks prior to the dinner we [collectively] finalized our plans and at midnight (Wednesday) we began our preparation."

Mickens noted that he and his dining facility managers Henry Ford, Louis Baker, and Ron Waters had to work in unison coordinating the event because they wanted all three Bagram DFACs – Viper, North and Dragon – to have the same portions availability and variety.

Falcon DFAC, which is run by Army Soldiers, supplemented the Kellogg Brown and Root's DFAC by allowing service members and Bagram personnel to expediently get dinner after having a lackluster breakfast and lunch due to the dinner's preparation.

Planning three months in advance for a dinner seemed to be an exaggerated notion, but when that dinner consisted of 18,000 pounds of turkey, 17,000 pounds of ham, 16,000 pounds of Prime Rib and 8,000 pounds of shrimp, three months took on the illusion

of three hours.

"We had guys working non-stop since Wednesday morning," said Mickens. "When you have to prep and cook food in volumes time becomes very important because as soon as one [dish] is complete the next one has to be ready to go (in the oven)."

Cooking more than 55,000 pounds of meat, it would seem that the 83-man staff had "enough on their plate", but Thanksgiving dinner isn't about meat alone – for it is nothing without the side dishes, items that if not cooked with the precise amount of the taste is ruined.

"We wanted service members to have the effects of back home, so we made sure we had a variety of side dishes," said Mickens as he describe the hundreds of pounds of mashed potatoes, corn-bread stuffing, green beans, corn-on-the-cob and other dishes, including 1,500 pies.

Mickens noted that the staff worked 15- to 18-hour shifts to ensure that the service members had the nostalgic taste of mom and grandma's home cooking.

"Caring is what Thanksgiving is all about and through our dinner we wanted to relay that to the service members," said Mickens. "We wanted to get service member as close to home as possible, or bring home to them."

"Thanksgiving is about togetherness and being with family," said Col. Thomas J. Boyle, Bagram Base Operations commander. "And as I looked at soldiers as they enjoyed the food I saw a family atmosphere and I saw an increase in camaraderie amongst the U.S. service members and the coalition forces."

Boyle noted that the spirit of the day began with the food adding, "The men of Kellogg Brown and Root take great pride in their work and that was illustrated with the Thanksgiving dinner. Not only did they serve a great meal, but the decoration and [presentation] of the dinner was excellent."

While Kellogg Brown and Root played the



Photo by Spc. Kelly Hunt

Spc. Luis Santiago, 213th Area Support Group, enjoys his Thanksgiving dinner at the Dragon dining facility over some turkey and a bottle of sparkling grape juice.

leading role in the event, they were not the only one to give thanks on the joyous day.

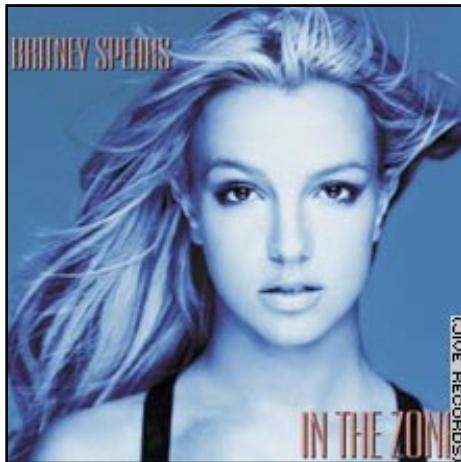
"Everyone realized [Thanksgiving] was a special day back home, so they wanted to make it special here," said Boyle as he spoke about the U.S. military units that volunteered to be servers at the DFACs. The units' willingness to support one another and go the extra mile to make life better on Bagram is spoke volumes about the character of those units."

Boyle stated that acts of Task Force 44, Logistics Task Force 129, 327th Military Police truly embodied the Army's core value of selfless service.

When the night ended Kellogg Brown and Root had served more than 10,000 meals (8,900 meals in the DFACs and 1,200 meals delivered to the forward operating bases), but more importantly, they had given life to more than 10,000 memories.



Music Notes (Compiled from CNN.com)



Album cover

Britney rules album charts

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — Pop princess Britney Spears, aided by a publicity blitzkrieg, steamrolled to number one on the music charts Wednesday, while a new album by scandal-plagued Michael Jackson failed to make the Top 10, the Nielsen Soundscan tracking service said.

The release of Spears' new album, "In the Zone," has been carefully aided by a publicity barrage which helped foster Spears' fourth consecutive No. 1 debut. But the album's sales fell short of the pop star's previous efforts, continuing her downward sales trajectory in recent years.

To promote the album, the 21-year-old Spears has seemed omnipresent recently, posing scantily clad for magazine covers, appearing in several television interviews and causing a major stir by kissing Madonna during the MTV Video Music Awards.

For the week ended November 23, "In the Zone," released by Jive, a unit of Bertelsmann AG's BMG, sold an estimated 609,000 units, the fourth highest opening in 2003, behind efforts by rapper 50 Cent, Linkin Park and Clay Aiken.

It fell below earlier CDs like "Britney," which debuted in 2001 with 746,000 units, and "Oops! ... I Did It Again," which sold 1.3 million units in its opening week in 2000.

Nevertheless, retailers said they expected the star to have staying power in coming weeks, helped by holiday shopping.

Never-before-heard Cash

NEW YORK — Fans of the late Johnny Cash have a lot to keep them occupied: A box set released Tuesday contains a staggering 64 never-heard-before recordings.

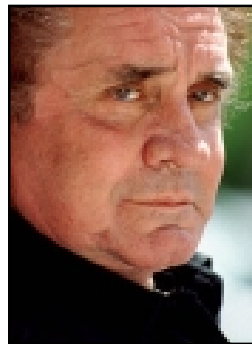
The five-disc box, "Unearthed," is all material recorded during the last decade, during Cash's fruitful partnership with Rick Rubin, who had been known best as a rap and rock producer.

Cash died September 12 at age 71 of complications from diabetes.

"It seems like a nice punctuation," Rubin said.

The set includes a duet with the late Joe Strummer on Bob Marley's "Redemption Song," and collaborations with Fiona Apple, Nick Cave, Carl Perkins and Glen Campbell. Cash tackles two Neil Young songs, "Heart of Gold" and "Pocahontas," as well as material by Kris Kristofferson, Dolly Parton, Steve Earle, Roy Orbison, Chuck Berry and Willie Nelson.

The Cash-Rubin collaboration seemed like an odd one: a long-haired, somewhat mysterious impresario who was one of rap's behind-the-scenes pioneers and a music legend who had been largely written off as a contemporary recording artist.



Johnny Cash in '94.



Natalie Maines at the VH1 "Big in '03" show. The Dixie Chicks singer criticized the Iraq war.

Singer sounds off on war

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Dixie Chicks singer Natalie Maines, whose criticism of President Bush last spring led to boycotts of the group's music, still has a lot to say about the war in Iraq.

"I think people were misled and I think people are fighting a war that they didn't know they were going to be fighting," Maines said Friday on NBC's "Today" show. "And I think they were misled by people who should have been asking questions and weren't."

The country stars faced criticism and even death threats after Maines said she and her bandmates were ashamed that President Bush was from Texas. She made the remark in London shortly before the war began.

Though Maines apologized for the phrasing of her remark, some radio stations banned the group's music. The group also received death threats in the wake of Maines' comments.

Maines said Friday she did not feel vindicated by how the war has unfolded: "I would have liked to have been proven wrong."

Bagram Air Base MWR presents

"The Sum of All Fears"

1530Z at the MWR building:

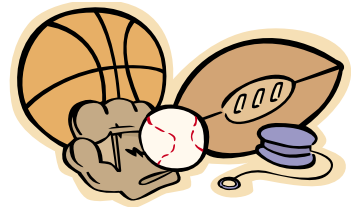
CIA analyst Jack Ryan hunts down a group of terrorists who plan to detonate a nuclear device at the Superbowl.

Tomorrow's movie: "Dennis Miller, the Raw Feed"



Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from SI.com)



UConn back on track with win over Utah

NEW YORK – Connecticut's Preseason NIT stumble turned out to be a temporary condition.

The Huskies played more like their No. 1 ranking Friday night, manhandling overmatched Utah 76-44 to take third place in the tournament. It was small consolation for UConn, stunned in the semifinals by Georgia Tech 77-61. The Yellow Jackets played Texas Tech for the championship in the late game Friday.

Emeka Okafor shrugged off his aching back to dominate inside as the Huskies demonstrated the resolve coach Jim Calhoun said was missing in their loss to Georgia Tech.

UConn (3-1) ran off 13 straight points in the game's opening minutes. Okafor had nine points in 7 1/2 minutes, matching his total in the Georgia Tech game.

Okafor's back was still a problem. He often winced and he spent one timeout on the floor in front of the UConn bench as an assistant helped him stretch. With 11:21 remaining in the game and UConn ahead by 32 points, he went to the dressing room.

He was far too much for Utah (3-1) to handle, scoring 15 points in the first half, missing just one of eight shots. He finished with 21 points and seven rebounds. Denham Brown added 19, hitting all eight shots.

Calhoun questioned his team's toughness after the loss to Georgia Tech and UConn responded. The Huskies dived after loose balls, broke through screens, played defense with a purpose and did all the things the coach said was missing in Wednesday night's game.



Jim Calhoun questioned his team's toughness after the loss to Georgia Tech and Emeka Okafor and UConn responded.

No. 6 Texas defeats Texas A&M, ends season with sixth consecutive victory

COLLEGE STATION, Texas – Cedric Benson ran for 283 yards and four touchdowns and No. 6 Texas strengthened its position for the school's first Bowl Championship Series bid Friday with a 46-15 win over rival Texas A&M.

Benson rushed for 205 yards in the second half against the 95th rated defense in the nation, helping the Longhorns (10-2, 7-1 Big 12) break open a game the Aggies (4-8, 2-6) kept close until the third quarter with two short touchdown drives after Texas turnovers.

Benson had 35 carries and scored on runs of 21, 4, 8 and 35 yards. He broke the record of the most rushing yards against the traditionally tough Wrecking Crew defense, surpassing former Heisman Trophy

winner Ricky Williams' 259 yards in a Texas win in 1998.

Terrence Murphy led A&M with seven catches for 150 yards.

Texas posted its sixth straight win since a 65-13 loss to No. 1 Oklahoma back on Oct. 11 that knocked it out of the national title chase. The Longhorns are ranked No. 6 in the BCS standings and most likely within an Oklahoma victory of an at-large bid to the Fiesta Bowl or Rose Bowl.

Texas needs the Sooners to beat Kansas State in the Big 12 title game on Dec. 6 to get to the BCS. If K-State wins, the Wildcats and Sooners will get the Big 12's two BCS bids, likely sending the Longhorns tumbling all the way to the Alamo Bowl in San Antonio.



Michael Clayton was one of six players to score touchdowns for the Tigers.

LSU wraps up SEC West title with win

BATON ROUGE – Matt Mauck made sure the only thing LSU had to worry about was the BCS computers — not another last-minute comeback by Arkansas.

Mauck threw four touchdown passes in three quarters to send No. 3 LSU into the Southeastern Conference title game and keep the Tigers in contention for the national championship with a 55-24 victory over Arkansas on Friday.

The Razorbacks rallied last year, scoring the winning touchdown with nine seconds left in the game, to knock LSU out of the conference championship game.

"Our idea was, 'Score as many as you can,'" Mauck said. "Our guys played really hard. There's no quit in them."

Mauck threw touchdowns of 10, 2, 22 and 37 yards to help LSU (11-1, 7-1) clinch the SEC West for the second time in three years. Mauck, who left after the third quarter, completed 12 of 19 passes for 186 yards to give the Tigers their second 11-win season ever.

"It's great — it's a great feeling," LSU receiver Michael Clayton said. "We set out to get in it at the beginning of the season and we finally accomplished that. We've got one more game to make it a dream come true."

LSU will play either Georgia, Tennessee or Florida for the conference championship next Saturday in Atlanta. Not knowing which team the Tigers will face annoyed LSU coach Nick Saban. It's unfair for the other teams to know who to prepare for while LSU has to guess, he said.



Tiger Woods and Elin Nordegren attended the Ryder Cup together in England in September 2002.

Swedish model accepts proposal from Tiger Woods

JACKSONVILLE, Florida – Tiger Woods and his Swedish girlfriend, Elin Nordegren, are engaged.

The golfer's agent, Mark Steinberg of IMG, confirmed the couple's engagement to *The Associated Press* on Friday but declined to give details.

"She called this morning and was incredibly happy," Nordegren's father, Thomas, told the Swedish newspaper *Expressen*. "I only spoke shortly with them on the telephone, but they were happy, and I congratulated them."

Thomas Nordegren, a correspondent for Swedish Radio in Washington, could not immediately be reached for comment by the *AP*.

Ashley Cocks, a spokesman for the Shamwari Game Reserve in South Africa, said in a statement that Woods proposed to Nordegren while at the game park outside Port Elizabeth. Woods had been in Fancourt, South Africa, for the Presidents Cup, which ended Sunday.

The proposal came during a walk at sunset Tuesday, he said, adding that when the couple left Friday aboard a private jet, Nordegren had a "huge diamond on her finger."

Solution from Friday's Percussion Session Crossword in the *Freedom Watch*

(Courtesy of QUIZLAND.com)

A	L	T	A	R		L	A	S	T		F	A	K	E
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B	R	E	A	D	S	T	I	C	K		R	B	I	S
S	E	E	R		T	E	N		E	O	C	E	N	E
			E	V	A	N		P	A	P	E	R	E	D
R	A	F	T	E	R		G	O	W	E	S	T		
E	M	O	T	E		S	I	L	A	S		G	O	D
V	E	R	O		S	H	A	K	Y		C	O	V	E
S	S	T		I	P	A	N	A		G	O	R	E	N
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O	N	E	M	A	N		T	O	P		R	A	S	H
M	I	R	O		F	E	R	D	E	L	A	N	C	E
E	S	C	S		E	L	I	A		A	L	T	O	N
N	E	E	T		D	I	O	N		S	L	E	W	S



By Mark Baker

Pvt. Murphy's Law

Kandahar chapel hours**Sunday**

- ❖ 0500Z — Roman Catholic mass
- ❖ 0630Z — Protestant worship
- ❖ 0830Z — Latter-Day Saints worship
- ❖ 1130Z — Roman Catholic mass
- ❖ 1430Z — Gospel service

Monday

- ❖ 1130Z — Rosary and prayers
- ❖ 1430Z — Gospel choir practice

Tuesday

- ❖ 1130Z — Orthodox/Catholic Bible study
- ❖ 1430Z — Protestant Bible study

Wednesday

- ❖ 1130Z — Roman Catholic mass
- ❖ 1430Z — Protestant mid-week service

Thursday

- ❖ 1430Z — Gospel Bible study

Friday

- ❖ 0830Z — Islamic Jumaa'h prayer
- ❖ 1130Z — Orthodox Christian hymn service
- ❖ 1430Z — Jewish prayer

Saturday

- ❖ 0530Z — Seventh-Day Adventist worship
- ❖ 1130Z — Orthodox Christian Divine Liturgy
- ❖ 1430Z — Gospel Choir practice

Bagram chapel hours**Sunday**

- ❖ 0530Z — Catholic mass
- ❖ 0700Z — Protestant worship
- ❖ 0830Z — Latter-Day Saints worship
- ❖ 1400Z — Gospel service

Monday

- ❖ 0700Z — Catholic mass

Tuesday

- ❖ 0700Z — Catholic mass
- ❖ 1400Z — Protestant Bible study

Wednesday

- ❖ 0700Z — Catholic mass
- ❖ 1400Z — Protestant mid-week service

Thursday

- ❖ 0700Z — Catholic mass
- ❖ 1400Z — Gospel Bible study

Friday

- ❖ 0700Z — Catholic mass
- ❖ 0745Z — Noon-Day prayer
- ❖ 0830Z — Islamic Jumaa'h prayer
- ❖ 1430Z — Jewish prayer

Saturday

- ❖ 1330Z — Gospel Choir practice
- ❖ 1430Z — Bible study
- ❖ 1515Z — Catholic mass
- ❖ 1900Z — Evening Worship service

K2 chapel hours**Sunday**

- ❖ 0300Z — Liturgical Service
- ❖ 0400,0730,1130Z — General Protestant Service
- ❖ 0530Z — Roman Catholic Mass
- ❖ 1230Z — Latter Day Saints

Monday

- ❖ 0230Z — Devotions and Prayer
- ❖ 1230Z — Catholic Mass

Tuesday

- ❖ 1230Z — Catholic Mass
- ❖ 1400Z — Bible study

Wednesday

- ❖ 0230Z — Devotions and Prayer
- ❖ 1230Z — Catholic Mass
- ❖ 1400Z — Midweek Praise Service

Thursday

- ❖ 1230Z — Catholic Mass

Friday

- ❖ 1400Z — Jewish Service
- ❖ 0230Z — Devotions and Prayer
- ❖ 1230Z — Catholic Mass
- ❖ 1400Z — Bible study

Saturday

- ❖ 0400Z — Jewish Service
- ❖ 1230Z — Catholic Mass

CJCMOTF chapel hours**Sunday**

- ❖ 1100Z — Christian service
- ❖ 1430Z — U.S. Embassy service
- ❖ 1900Z — Christian service

Wednesday

- ❖ 1900Z — Bible study - 2nd & 4th

Thursdays

- ❖ 1900Z — Roman Catholic mass

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Hi — 57F
Lo — 23F

K2

Hi — 57F
Lo — 31F

Kabul

Hi — 59F
Lo — 27F

KAF

Hi — 61F
Lo — 36F

Sunday

Hi — 57F
Lo — 32F



Hi — 50F
Lo — 24F



Hi — 59F
Lo — 34F



Hi — 64F
Lo — 39F

Monday

Hi — 57F
Lo — 25F



Hi — 51F
Lo — 30F



Hi — 59F
Lo — 28F



Hi — 61F
Lo — 36F

Task Force Phoenix chapel hours**Daily**

- ❖ 1430Z — Estudio Biblico En Espanol

Sunday

- ❖ 1330Z — Catholic Mass
- ❖ 1600Z — Latter Day Saints (DFAC)

Tuesday

- ❖ 1530Z — Bible Study

Friday

- ❖ 0530Z — Protestant Service
- ❖ 1230Z — Choir practice

All events are held in Chapel or DFAC.